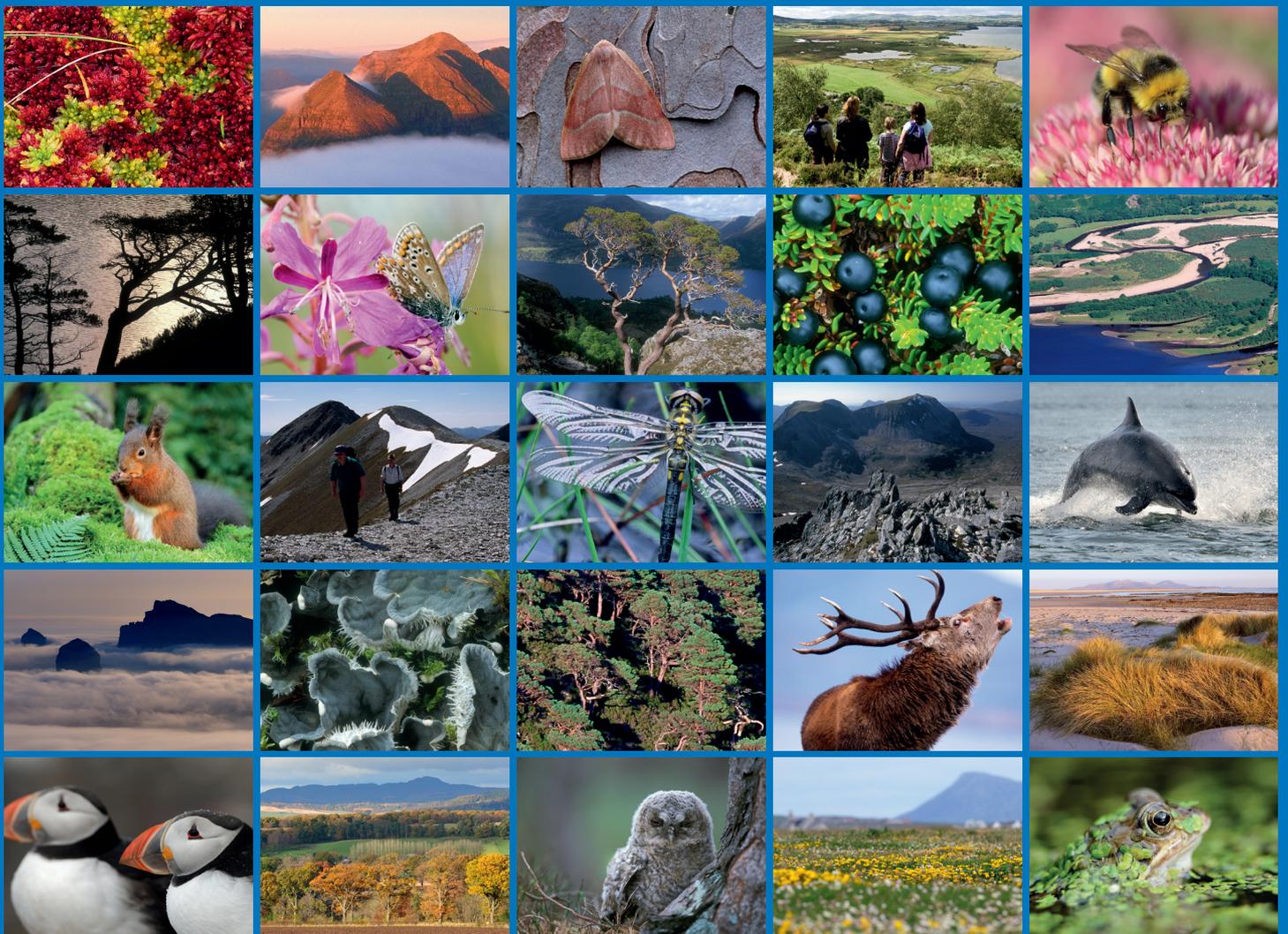


# Lowland deer management – assessing the delivery of public interests – phase 2





Scottish Natural Heritage  
Dualchas Nàdair na h-Alba

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# RESEARCH REPORT

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**Research Report No. 1188**

## **Lowland deer management – assessing the delivery of public interests – phase 2**

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## RESEARCH REPORT

# Summary

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## Lowland deer management – assessing the delivery of public interests – phase 2

**Research Report No. 1188**  
**Project No: 117073**  
**Contractor: Chetwynd Rural**  
**Year of publication: 2019**

### Keywords

lowland deer; deer management; public interests; Scottish Forestry; stakeholder workshops, online survey

### Background

The aim of this study was to gain a greater understanding of current models of lowland deer management and the extent to which they are delivering the public interest. The project area used as the focus of this study was to the north of Glasgow and the west of Stirling which encompasses a representative area of lowland Scotland land uses and issues. This report follows on from a key finding in Phase 1 which identified a requirement for further work including greater stakeholder engagement.

The study aimed to engage stakeholders to understand how, where and why practical deer management is carried out within the project area. The methods used were workshops and online questionnaires. Details of these were circulated through stakeholder organisations and social media to approximately 10,000 parties involved in deer management within the project area. This information is presented here along with an assessment of the different models of deer management in the project area.

### Main findings

- Details of the stakeholder workshops and survey questionnaire were circulated through stakeholder organisations and social media to approximately 10,000 parties involved in deer management.
- Survey returns were submitted by 125 respondents of which approximately 42% provided detailed responses and 34% provided contact details and a request to be kept informed of information relating to the project and future developments with deer management.
- The workshop discussions and survey returns indicated that there are four primary categories of deer manager within the project area: Land / Forest Owners; Stalking Tenants; Deer Controllers and Deer Contractors.
- From the information in the survey returns and feedback at the workshops it is apparent that deer management is taking place across the project area for a range of purposes.
- The reasons why deer management is undertaken include: protection of agricultural crops; protection of forestry/woodland; own recreational stalking; venison production; population control and prevention of DVCs.

- The level of deer management qualifications held varies and is dependent on whether the management is undertaken on a recreational, vocational or contract basis.
- The level of authorisations applied for varies and is dependent on whether the management is undertaken on a recreational, vocational or contract basis.
- Population surveys and woodland assessments are carried out by many deer managers in the course of their management activities.
- The overall cull undertaken by the primary deer managers within the Project Area is potentially in the region of 5,000 – 6,000 deer per annum, representing 0.06 deer/ha/pa.
- Many recreational and vocational deer managers are willing to attend a deer working group or forum.

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## **Acknowledgements**

SNH would like to thank all the stakeholder organisations listed in 2.2 and all the individuals who contributed by attending the stakeholder workshops or responding to the online questionnaire.

## **1. INTRODUCTION**

### **1.1 Purpose of the project**

Wild deer are a common property resource in Scotland. Their management requires an element of strategic thinking and effective collaboration between neighbouring interests due to their movement across landholding boundaries. This management can be undertaken through co-ordinated strategic land management groups, such as formal Deer Management Groups or more informal deer working groups or forums. To operate effectively, these groups and the management strategies they develop will follow the Code of Practice on Deer Management and Best Practice Guidance will provide direction in all operations relating to the management of deer.

The Scottish Natural Heritage (SNH) 2016 Review of Deer Management identified significant challenges for deer management in lowland Scotland and a need to develop formal collaborative structures to deliver deer management in the lowland areas.

In order to achieve this the Lowland Deer Management Project (LDMP) was set up to gain greater understanding of current models of lowland deer management and the extent to which they are delivering the public interest.

Deer management delivers a range of “public interest” benefits to the people of Scotland. SNH has identified 14 specific areas of public interest derived from the Code of Practice on Deer Management and Wild Deer: A National Approach. This Code identifies that having deer as part of Scotland’s natural heritage is a public interest and that deer may also have positive and negative impacts on other public interests. The public interest in deer management is grouped under the following three broad outcomes:

- A high quality, robust and adaptable environment
- Sustainable economic development
- Social well-being

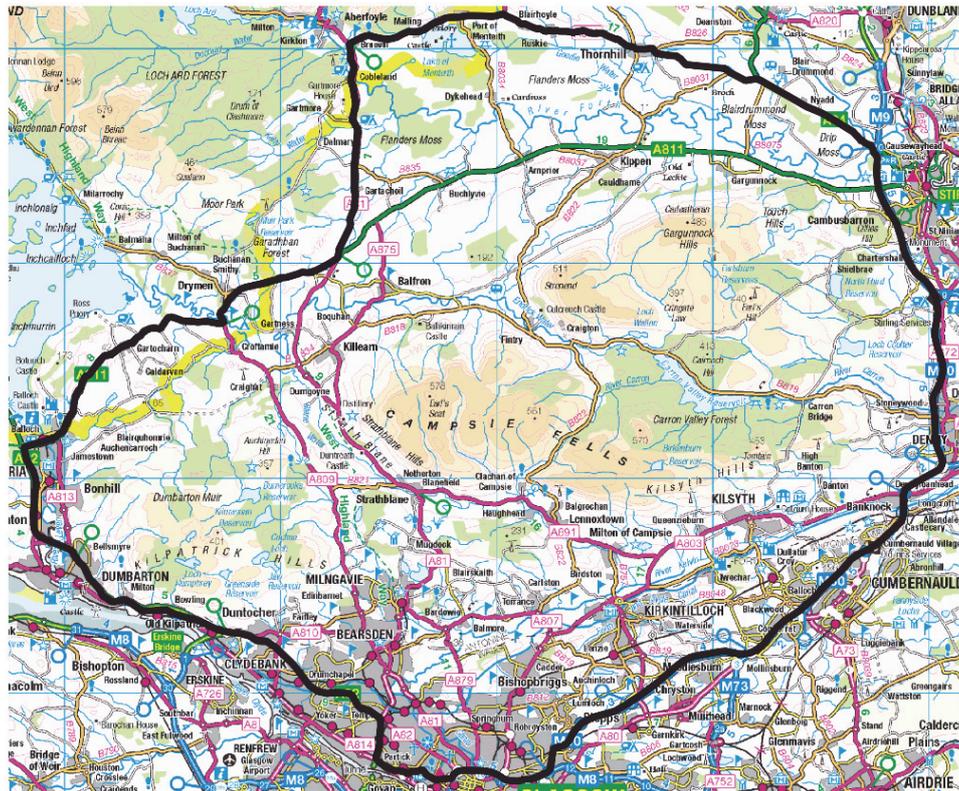
Phase 1 of the LDMP identified a pilot area to the north of Glasgow and this looked at the availability and usefulness of spatial data related to public interests that are impacted by deer and deer management within this project area. A key finding in Phase 1 identified a requirement for further work and this included recommendations for future data gathering and greater stakeholder engagement.

Phase 2 of the project aims to engage stakeholders to understand better how, where and why practical deer management is carried out within the Project Area.

Chetwynd Rural was commissioned by SNH to undertake Phase 2 of the Lowland Deer Management Project in January 2019.

### **1.2 Project area**

The Project Area established by SNH lies to the north of Glasgow and to the east of Stirling with boundaries formed by main trunk roads. It extends to 95,889 hectares (958.89 sq.km) overall as shown on the plan below.



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**Figure 1. Project Area Boundary**

This Project Area has been identified as having all the characteristics of the lowlands. It encapsulates the transition from rural to urban environments with land use types comprising:

- commercial forestry;
- private and National Forest Estate woodlands;
- agricultural and amenity land;
- Local Authority owned land;
- brownfield and development sites; and
- small holdings.

The range of public interests delivered within the Project Area include:

- woodland expansion;
- protection and enhancement of native woodlands;
- managing deer impacts in relation to designated sites;
- economic impacts associated with damage to woodland, agricultural land, private gardens and from deer vehicle collisions; and
- economic benefits derived from sporting leases and venison sales.

### **1.3 Project aims**

Following discussions with the Steering Group, the following project aims were agreed:

- To secure the active participation of relevant stakeholder organisations eg British Association of Shooting and Conservation (BASC), Scottish Association for Country Sports (SACS), British Deer Society (BDS), National Farmers Union Scotland (NFUS), Scottish Land and Estates (SLaE), Lowland Deer Network Scotland (LDNS) and land management companies, etc.
- To identify and engage with a representative number of relevant stakeholders within the project area with contact made through organisations such as British Association of Shooting & Conservation (BASC), British Deer Society (BDS), social media and the Lowland Deer Network Scotland (LDNS) etc.
- To secure the active participation of relevant stakeholder organisations eg BASC, SACS, BDS, NFUS, SLaE, LDNS and land management companies etc.
- To organise, distribute and collate a questionnaire to stakeholders within the project area.
- To organise and deliver a series of facilitated stakeholder engagement workshops.
- To assess and report the results of the questionnaire and stakeholder surveys to produce a final report.

These elements of the Project and their effectiveness in terms of providing information are described in more detail in Section 5.

### **1.4 Project outputs**

Following discussions with the Steering Group, the following project outputs were agreed:

- A series of stakeholder workshops within the project area.
- A questionnaire to all stakeholders and stakeholder organisations.
- A report that describes how deer management is delivered in the project area.

## **2. METHODOLOGY**

### **2.1 Identification and engagement with stakeholders**

The Project Area covers a diverse range of landownership interests ranging from agricultural, commercial forestry, private woodland and National Forest Estate, amenity land, Local Authority owned land, brownfield and development sites and small holdings.

Engagement with stakeholders within these ownership interest categories was made through the circulation of information relating to the project via relevant stakeholder organisations, social media and the posting of leaflets at local sporting retail premises and venues.

### **2.2 Securing participation of stakeholder organisations**

Overall, fifty-five relevant stakeholder organisations were identified through web-based research and their contact details were collected from open information sources available in the public domain. The stakeholder organisations comprised the following:

- British Association of Shooting and Conservation (BASC)
- British Deer Society (BDS)
- Confor
- Forestry and Land Scotland (FLS)
- Forestry management companies
- Game Dealers
- Land management companies
- Local Authorities
- Local Deer Management Groups
- Local gun shops
- Loch Lomond and Trossachs National Park (LLTNP)
- Lowland Deer Network Scotland (LDNS)
- Lowland Deer Panel
- Mugdock Country Park
- National Farmers Union of Scotland (NFUS)
- Scottish Association of Country Sports (SACS)
- Scottish Countryside Alliance (CA)
- Scottish Gamekeepers Association (SGA) Scottish Land and Estates (SLE)
- Scottish Quality Wild Venison (SQWV)
- Scottish Society Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (SSPCA)
- Scottish Water
- Scottish Wildlife Trust (SWT)

All relevant stakeholder organisations were contacted by email and provided with notification of the project, including details of the background and purpose. In addition, a request was made to circulate details of the workshops and survey link to their membership and clients with interests in the Project Area.

Overall, 75% (responses: 41/55) of stakeholder organisations responded positively to confirm that they would be happy to assist with and / or contribute to the project and 4% (responses: 2/55) responded to express concerns over the lack of community / stakeholder engagement in the initial stages of project and General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) compliance.

All stakeholder organisations received further follow up communication relating to the dates of workshops and the survey questionnaire link and 36% (responses: 20/55) circulated this

information to their membership and clients within the project area. In addition, 5% (responses: 3/55) of stakeholder organisations identified as having significant management input in the project area agreed to meet to discuss the project and three stakeholder organisations attended a workshop held within the project area.

### 2.3 Distribution and collation of a questionnaire

A number of stakeholder organisations agreed to support the project by circulating specific information relating to the workshops and the link to the survey questionnaire. A combination of social media and e-news posts was used in this process as well as targeted email shots to memberships living in and around the project areas.

Social media was used to publicise the project with posts providing background information to the project, notice of workshops and a link to the survey all posted on deer management related websites and platforms.

Flyers giving notice of the workshops were printed and distributed at the workshop venues and gun and country retailers located within and in close proximity to the project area.

The circulation of information relating to the project and the survey link is summarised in Table 1.

*Table 1: Circulation of Project Information and Survey Link*

| Name                       | Format        | Workshop Advert | Survey Link | Circulation |
|----------------------------|---------------|-----------------|-------------|-------------|
| <b><u>Social Media</u></b> |               |                 |             |             |
| Scottish Roe               | Facebook      | Yes             | Yes         | 6,874       |
| DSI (Official)             | Facebook      | Yes             | Yes         | 9,003       |
| SGA                        | Facebook      | Yes             | Yes         | 8,647       |
| BDS Official               | Facebook      | Yes             | Yes         | 10,734      |
| BDS                        | Deerbytes     | Yes             | Yes         | c.10,000    |
| Twitter                    | Personal Post | Yes             | Yes         | n/a         |
| BASC                       | Email         | Yes             | Yes         | 1,169       |
| SLaE                       | Weekly E-news | Yes             | Yes         | c.1,500     |
| <b><u>Outlets</u></b>      |               |                 |             |             |
| Bushwear - Perth           | Flyer         | Yes             | Yes         |             |
| Bushwear - Stirling        | Flyer         | Yes             | Yes         |             |
| Glasgow Fieldsports        | Flyer         | Yes             |             |             |
| Glazert Hotel, Lennoxton   | Flyer         | Yes             |             |             |
| Winnock Hotel, Drymen      | Flyer         | Yes             |             |             |
| Cross Keys Hotel, Kippen   | Flyer         | Yes             |             |             |
| Gerarde Rooney - Glasgow   | Flyer         | Yes             | Yes         |             |
| <b><u>Others</u></b>       |               |                 |             |             |
| Fit & Competent Register   | Email         | No              | Yes         | 33          |

The survey questionnaire was prepared following reference to the questionnaire produced by SAC Commercial in Phase 1 of the project <https://www.nature.scot/snh-research-report-1069-lowland-deer-management-assessing-delivery-public-interests> (annex 4: part 1 – landowner survey) and the questionnaire prepared by the Lowland Deer Panel: Key Questions produced and circulated in 2018 <https://www.nature.scot/sites/default/files/2018-04/Lowland%20Deer%20Panel%20-%20questions%20for%20stakeholders.pdf>.

A key factor with both of these questionnaires was that they required a written response from stakeholders so the decision was taken to simplify the survey questionnaire for Phase 2 by using the Survey Monkey format and a variety of more searching questions aimed at encouraging a wider range of specific land owner, deer management and stakeholder interests to engage. A range of questions relevant to their interest and involvement in the project area, covering a range of deer management and public interest sections were prepared and the survey was passed to SNH for comment and approval in February 2019 prior to circulation. The survey also requested contact information for the respondent if they were happy to provide such details, subject to GDPR. A copy of the Survey Monkey questionnaire is at Annex 1.

The survey link was circulated to attendees of workshops, stakeholder organisations and by some stakeholder organisations via targeted email shots to their membership. It is estimated that approximately 1.2% of recipients opened the link and 0.6% completed and returned the survey.

## 2.4 Delivery of stakeholder workshops

Four potential locations were identified for the delivery of facilitated stakeholder engagement workshops and these were based on the four geographic quarters of the project area. Following a preliminary site meeting with established deer controllers in the Project Area in January 2019, this was reduced to three venues located in Drymen, Kippen and Lennoxton, given it was felt that these venues best represented the local range of deer managers living in the Project Area.

The workshops were arranged on three consecutive evenings on a drop-in basis and the attendance is detailed in Table 2.

*Table 2: Workshop Attendance*

| Date      | Venue                       | Location  | Attendance |
|-----------|-----------------------------|-----------|------------|
| 05-Mar-19 | The Winnock Hotel           | Drymen    | 10         |
| 06-Mar-19 | The Cross Keys Inn          | Kippen    | 15         |
| 07-Mar-19 | Glazert Country House Hotel | Lennoxton | 1          |

The format for the workshop included a brief introduction on the background to the project, the outcomes of Phase 1 and anticipated outcomes of Phase 2 followed by group discussion.

The key outcomes and discussions from each workshop were as follows:

### **Drymen**

- Attended by recreational stalkers, controllers, landowners and a student.
- Local views expressed that Red deer were extending their range into farmland but decreasing in numbers given increased activity by contractors.
- Local issues with increasing numbers of foxes and geese.
- Possible decrease in DVCs in the local area.
- Concerns given over the administration burden of deer groups.
- Concerns over increasing public access, in particular dog walkers.
- General opinion that larder facilities were not an issue and that shared larders raised issues with trust.
- Deer larders could provide a hub for local operators and enable increased collaboration.
- General opinion that 95% of properties within project area had some form of deer management programme in place, this generally undertaken by local operators.
- Sporting rates perceived to be an issue and a concern.
- Foreign clients are regular visitors with some estates hosting stalking parties on a regular annual basis.
- Adverse public opinion and social media both identified as threats to legitimate deer management.
- Reports that the Police have been called by a member of the public to check on a stalker in more than one case.

### **Kippen**

- Attended by recreational stalkers, landowners, community trust representative, contract stalker, gamekeeper and forestry agent.
- Local view that Red deer are increasing in number and that the numbers of Roe deer were stable.
- Opinion that possibly as few as 10 - 20% properties in the local area had some form of deer control.
- Possible decrease of DVCs arising from increased driver awareness of deer.
- Foxes seen as an issue, particularly by landowners.
- Opinion that farmers have limited awareness of woodland damage caused by deer.
- Local opinion that deer management was increasingly being undertaken by parties travelling into the project area and being secured by tenants offering high rents with less time to spend on the ground leading to a lack of opportunity for locals and less effective deer management.
- Doubts shown over the benefits of a deer group but larder sharing facilities would be welcomed by some.
- Lack of trust between deer managers an issue, particularly with larder sharing.
- No objection to providing information through returns although the threat of sporting rates considered an issue, with this cited as a possible reason for reduced cull declarations.
- Public access a key issue, particularly with commercial dog walkers early in the morning with a lack of respect to stalkers and irresponsible actions identified.
- Incidents of commercially walked dogs killing deer had been recorded, particularly roe fawns.
- Assistance requested from SNH / BASC in addressing public opinion and perception of deer management with increased deer related information and PR input required.

## Lennoxtown

- Only one party with no direct deer management involvement in the project area attended this workshop and it is not known why more people did not attend this workshop.

### 2.5 Assessment of questionnaire

The Survey Monkey platform offers a variety of survey styles as well as assessment and analysis formats. Given that some respondents to the survey noted multiple interests either in terms of their involvement in deer management and / or land in the Project Area, each survey response was analysed individually and recorded within a series of tables to ensure that they were categorised as accurately as possible.

The survey responses have been analysed according to the respondent's primary involvement in the project and these include the following:

- Land or Forest Owner
- Land or Forest Manager
- Deer Controller
- Stalking Tenant / Permission / Leaseholder
- Local Authority / Community Organisation
- Stakeholder Organisation
- Other

In total, survey returns were submitted by 125 respondents of which approximately 42% (responses: 53/125) provided detailed responses and 34% (responses: 42/125) provided contact details and a request to be kept informed of information relating to the project and future developments with deer management.

The main cross-over with multiple interests arose where respondents stated at the start of the survey that they were both "Stalking Tenant/Permission/Leaseholder" and "Deer Controller". Both Question 10 for "Stalking Tenant/Permission/Leaseholder" and "Deer Controller" asked respondents to describe how they are undertaking deer management by ticking a box adjacent to one or more of 5 selected questions which provided further detail on their involvement. Where respondents declared multiple interests within a survey return and ticked the box in Question 10 against "Stalking leased for payment" they were classified as "Stalking Tenant/Permission/Leaseholder" whereas if they ticked ""Deer Controller employed by owner or agent" they were classified as "Deer Controller".

The responses received through Survey Monkey also recorded the IP address of respondents and these were recorded within the analysis tables to ensure that each respondent only provided one survey return for each property they were involved in.

### 3. DELIVERY OF DEER MANAGEMENT IN THE PROJECT AREA

From the group discussions held at the workshops and from the survey returns it is apparent that the parties delivering practical deer management within the project area tend to classify themselves within one of five distinct categories:

- Land /Forest Owner
- Stalking Tenant / Permission Holder / Recreational Stalker
- Deer Controller
- Wildlife Ranger / Deer Contractor
- Land / Forest Manager

The first category, **Land / Forest Owners** is self-explanatory, and their responses recorded whether they undertook the deer management on their property in-house or whether they leased out the stalking or retained controllers to manage deer. It is probably the case that much of the deer management undertaken in-house is undertaken by employees rather than by the owners themselves.

**Stalking Tenant / Permission Holder / Recreational Stalker** (referred to as “**Stalking Tenants**” within this section of the report) generally operate under a lease, permission or informal arrangement with consideration exchanged in return for the right to shoot deer. These arrangements may be short term, seasonal or run from year to year.

**Stalking Tenants** tend to operate on their own or in small syndicates over relatively small areas of ground with small farms being the predominant location for their activities or occasionally small estates. The main purposes for stalking tenants undertaking deer control is stated as the protection of agricultural crops with own recreational stalking lease or permission and venison for home consumption and / or sale recorded through both the workshops and survey responses.

**Deer Controllers and Deer Contractors** are broadly similar in terms of the scale and focus of their operation and in their approach to undertaking deer management within the project area. For the purpose of this section of the project report they have been kept as two separate categories, and their similarities are compared in more detail in Section 4 of the report.

The term **Deer Controller** is widely used within the project area to try and identify the different approach required for the management of deer in the lowland setting and to make the culling of deer more acceptable to a wider public audience. There is an opinion that the term deer stalker, as applied to both professional and vocational deer managers in upland regions has a strong connection with more traditional deer management models and that it does not fit well in the lowland setting where more territorial deer are the focus of management, possibly undertaken with greater public scrutiny. It is apparent that **Deer Controllers** generally undertake deer management on a vocational basis, operating as a micro-business either to break even on their activities and investments in kit or to make a small profit.

**Deer Contractors** on the other hand are commercial entities and tend to operate either on their own, or more commonly in small teams of two to three people over larger areas of ground ranging from larger mixed farms to forestry plantations and estates. The main purpose for **Deer contractors** undertaking deer control is predominantly stated as the protection of forestry / woodland, protection of agricultural crops, population control / management and prevention of Deer Vehicle Collisions (DVCs) recorded through both the workshops and survey responses.

**Land / Forest Managers** manage land on behalf of private, corporate or institutional landowners and do not generally own land in their own right. They are responsible for organising and overseeing a range of management operations on behalf of their client, including in many cases deer management. **Land / Forest Managers** will, depending on the management objectives of their client, either let the deer stalking out to a tenant in return for consideration or will arrange a contract with a third party for the control of deer.

The level of involvement for each of these categories in the delivery of deer management in the Project Area is described in more detail below.

### **3.1 Land / forest owner**

Land / Forest Owners represented 22% (*responses: 27 / 125*) of the overall survey returns and declared involvement in approximately 7,678 ha. overall with an average landholding size is 959 ha (*sample: 8 properties extended to 7,678 ha. with range 101 – 4,085 ha*).

The predominant land use owned is agricultural land followed by forestry / woodland. The land management objectives recorded include agriculture, forestry, conservation, tourism, and recreational stalking.

The primary view held by 40% (*responses: 4 / 10*) of Land / Forest Owners is that deer are considered to be an issue due to the impacts they cause, followed by 30% (*responses: 3 / 10*) holding the view that deer are not considered to be an issue.

Approximately 33% of Land / Forest Owners (*responses: 3 / 9*) responding to the survey indicated that they undertake the deer management required on their property. The remaining landowners indicated that 22% (*responses: 2 / 9*) let their stalking to tenants and 33% (*responses: 3 / 9*) retained a deer controller to undertake their deer management. One respondent confirmed that they undertake no deer control on their property due to safety issues although there is no indication as to who or what this related to.

The average cull return reported per Land / Forest Owner is 38 deer per annum (*responses: 7*) with a total cull of 204 Roe deer and 64 red deer per annum declared. This represents a cull of 0.03 deer/ha or 3 deer/sq.km.

Of the Land / Forest Owners, or their employees, undertaking their own deer management, 100% hold DSC 1 (*responses: 3 / 3*) and 67% hold DSC 2 (*responses: 2 / 3*) with 63% (*responses: 5 / 8*) maintaining records of species and number shot.

Approximately 11% (*responses: 1 / 9*) of Land / Forest Owners utilise either a night shooting authorisation or an Out of Season Authorisation with the majority declaring that authorisations are not required given the way that they undertake deer management.

Approximately 55% (*responses: 5 / 9*) of Land / Forest Owners undertake either Woodland Damage Assessments, thermal imaging counts or dung counts / population assessments as part of their deer management activities with Woodland Damage Assessments at 44% (*responses: 4 / 9*) the most commonly used survey type of survey used

In terms of the main challenges in managing deer over the next 5 years, 44% (*responses: 4 / 9*) of Land / Forest Owners expect increasing numbers of deer to be the primary challenge followed by an equal percentage at 22% for lack of collaboration with neighbours, access to larders and sporting rates (*responses: 2 / 9*).

Only 22% (*responses: 2 / 9*) of Land / Forest Owners indicated that they would attend a deer working group whereas 78% (*responses: 7 / 9*) indicated that they would like to receive information produced by a DWG.

### **3.2 Stalking tenants**

Stalking Tenants represent 26% (*responses: 33 / 125*) of the overall survey returns and declared involvement in approximately 1,267 ha. overall.

The average main landholding size managed by a stalking tenant is 127 ha (*sample: 10 properties extended to 1,267 ha. with a range of 20 - 405 ha*) and the main purpose for carrying out deer control is the protection of agricultural crops followed by for own recreational use, venison for own use and protection of forestry / woodland.

The primary view held by 62% (*responses: 8 / 13*) of stalking tenants is that deer are considered to be an issue due to the impacts they cause on the main property on which they stalk, followed by 31% (*responses: 4 / 13*) holding the view that deer are not considered to be an issue.

Approximately 60% of stalking tenants (*responses: 6 / 10*) responding to the survey indicated that they stalked on more than one property with one party declaring that they stalked 14 separate properties in total in and around the Project Area.

The average cull return reported per stalking tenant was 22 deer per annum (*responses: 11*) with a total cull of 165 roe deer and 75 red deer per annum declared. This represents a cull of 0.19 deer/ha or 19 deer/sq.km.

Of the stalking tenants undertaking deer management, 77% hold DSC 1 (*responses: 10 / 13*) and 69% hold DSC 2 (*responses: 9 / 13*) with approximately 85% (*responses: 11 / 13*) maintaining records of species, number, date and weight of deer shot.

Approximately 23% (*responses: 3 / 13*) of stalking tenants utilise night shooting authorisations and 54% (*responses: 7 / 13*) utilise out of season authorisations with 46% (*responses: 6 / 13*) declaring that no authorisations are required for deer management given the way that they undertake deer management.

Approximately 85% (*responses: 11 / 13*) of stalking tenants undertake either Woodland Damage Assessments, thermal imaging counts or Dung counts / population assessments as part of their deer management activities with thermal imaging counts at 69% (*responses: 9 / 13*) the most common method used.

Approximately 80% (*responses: 8 / 10*) of stalking tenants travel to the project area to stalk deer and 20% (*responses: 2 / 10*) live in the project area.

In terms of the main challenges in managing deer over the next 5 years, 54% (*responses: 7 / 13*) of stalking tenants cite sporting rates as the primary challenge with 46% (*responses: 6 / 13*) citing lack of collaboration with neighbours and increased public access as equal secondary concerns.

Approximately 85% (*responses: 11 / 13*) of stalking tenants expressed an interest in attending a deer working group meeting with the remainder indicating that they would like to receive information produced by a DWG.

These stalking tenants identified above generally hold themselves in a different category to those parties who pay rent for sporting leases of shooting, fishing and stalking rights over

larger areas of land or estates or those parties who pay outing and / or trophy fees to shoot a single deer. These categories were referred to both at the workshops and through the survey and it is felt that their input in to deer management in the Project Area is limited and often undertaken under the direction of a primary deer manager.

In the case of the parties who pay a rent for a sporting lease, these agreements are generally more formal and are either prepared and administered by management companies or by the owners of the properties themselves. These agreements generally cover the complete sporting rights, including shooting, stalking and fishing rights where available for an area of land such as a large farm, an estate or a woodland / forestry property. In this case they are normally referred to as "Sporting Tenants" and their activity is normally supervised by either a Land / Forest Owner or Land / Forest Manager. The opinion aired at workshops is that sporting tenants travel in from other parts of Scotland, the UK or possibly the EU and that they undertake deer management as and when time allows. They may be operating in accordance with a management plan and concurrently with either a deer controller or a contractor, who will assist in meeting the cull targets or with additional control in sensitive areas such as forestry restock sites.

In the case of those parties who pay for an opportunity for an outing to stalk and shoot a deer, these are normally referred to as "Sporting Clients" and their activity is normally supervised by either a Land / Forest Owner, their employee or a Deer Controller.

Neither sporting tenants nor sporting clients attended workshops or responded to the survey. It was raised in discussions at the workshops that Sporting Tenants, in some cases, may prevent local parties getting involved more widely in deer management given that their willingness and ability to pay significant rents for ground in order to secure a sporting lease. In a similar way to sporting clients, sporting tenants have not been identified as a primary deliverer of deer management in the Project Area given their efforts are likely to be recorded in survey responses provided by Land / Forest Owners, Land / Forest Managers or Deer Controllers.

### **3.3 Deer controller**

Deer Controllers represent 30% (*responses: 37 / 125*) of the overall survey returns, declared involvement in approximately 17,435 ha. overall and they are retained on a contractual basis to manage deer on behalf of landowners.

The average main landholding size managed by a Deer Controller is 1,090 ha (*sample: 16 properties extended to 17,435 ha. with a range of 38 – 3,238 ha*) and the main purpose for carrying out deer control is the protection of forestry / woodland followed by protection of agricultural crops and population control / management.

The primary view held by 94% (*responses: 17 / 18*) of deer controllers is that deer are considered to be an issue due to the impacts they cause on the main property on which they control deer.

Approximately 50% of deer controllers (*responses: 8 / 16*) responding to the survey indicated that they stalked on more than one property with one party declaring that they managed deer on 10 separate properties in total.

The average cull return reported per deer controller is 59 deer per annum (*responses: 17*) with a total cull of 849 roe deer and 153 red deer per annum declared. This represents a cull of 0.06 deer/ha or 6 deer/sq.km.

Of the deer controllers undertaking deer management, 89% hold DSC 1 (*responses: 16 / 18*) and 67% hold DSC 2 (*responses: 12 / 18*) with approximately 95% (*responses: 17 / 18*) maintaining records of species, number, date and weight of deer shot.

Approximately 50% (*responses: 9 / 18*) of deer controllers utilise night shooting authorisations and 72% (*responses: 13 / 18*) utilise an out of season authorisations with 22% (*responses: 4 / 18*) declaring that no authorisation is required.

Approximately 94% (*responses: 17 / 18*) of deer controllers undertake either Woodland Damage Assessments, thermal imaging counts or dung counts / population assessments as part of their deer management activities with Woodland Damage Assessments at 89% (*responses: 16 / 18*) the most common method used.

Approximately 44% (*responses: 8 / 18*) of deer controllers travel to the project area to control deer and 56% (*responses: 10 / 18*) live in the project area. Of those deer controllers that live in the project area, 60% travel outwith the project area to control deer in other areas.

In terms of the main challenges in managing deer over the next 5 years, 56% (*responses: 10 / 18*) of deer controllers cite increased public access as the primary challenge followed by 50% (*responses: 9 / 18*) citing lack of collaboration with neighbours and 44% (*responses: 8 / 18*) citing increasing numbers of deer as secondary and tertiary concerns.

Approximately 89% (*responses: 16 / 18*) of deer controllers expressed an interest in attending a deer working group meeting.

### **3.4 Wildlife ranger / deer contractor**

Wildlife Rangers and Deer Contractors represent 1% (*responses: 1 / 125*) of the overall survey returns and declared involvement approximately 10,000 ha. overall. The single response was submitted on behalf of group of Wildlife Rangers / Deer Contractors operating on an employed or retained on a self-employed basis to manage deer on behalf of government agencies.

The average area managed by a Wildlife Range / Deer Contractor is 833 ha (*sample: 1 property extending to 10,000 ha. employing approximately 12 controllers*) and the main purpose for carrying out deer control is the protection of forestry / woodland and population control / management.

The average cull return reported per wildlife ranger / deer contractor is 56 deer per annum (*responses: 12*) within the project area with a total cull of 559 roe deer and 108 red deer per annum declared. This represents a cull of 0.07 deer/ha or 7 deer/sq.km.

Of the wildlife rangers and deer contractors undertaking deer management, 100% hold DSC 1 and DSC 2 in addition to other relevant qualifications, including Emergency First Aid at Work, Manual Handling and Use of ATVs. Similarly, 100% maintain records of species, number, date and weight of deer shot.

All wildlife rangers and deer contractors utilise night shooting authorisations and out of season authorisations where required.

### **3.5 Land / forest manager**

Land / Forest Managers represent 10% of the overall survey returns and declared involvement in approximately 25 properties extending to 14,943 ha. overall with an average

management portfolio 2.8 properties or an average area of 1,660 ha. each under management.

The average landholding size under management is 587 ha (range 32 – 2,428 ha.).

Returns from land and forest management companies indicated that approximately 44% of landowners (*Reponses: 12 / 27*) undertook the deer management on properties that they are retained to manage. There was no indication made within the survey responses as to whether the deer management is undertaken by the owner personally or an employee, only that it is under the landowner's direct control.

The land and forest managers indicated that deer management on the remaining properties was undertaken either by stalking tenants (40%) or deer controllers (20%) or a combination of the two categories of deer manager. The average cull reported per property was 16 roe deer and 17 red deer where cull returns were provided with a total cull of 207 roe deer and 185 red deer per annum.

Although Land / Forest Managers play an active role in the delivery deer management, it is not direct management given that the management is undertaken by third parties, generally either under lease or contract or by the client themselves. For this reason, it is recognised through the collection of information via the survey that the areas and cull returns provided by Land / Forest Managers may also have been declared in survey responses provided by stalking tenants and / or deer controllers. For this reason, they have been identified as secondary deer managers for the purposes of this project.

## 4. COMPARISONS IN THE DELIVERY OF DEER MANAGEMENT

### 4.1 Delivery by primary deer managers

The activities, outputs and qualifications for the four primary categories delivering deer management within the project area are summarised in Table 3.

*Table 3: Comparisons in delivery by Primary Deer Managers*

|  | Primary Deer Managers  |                           |                        |                                    | Total    |
|--|------------------------|---------------------------|------------------------|------------------------------------|----------|
|  | Land / Forest Owner    | Stalking Tennant          | Deer Controller        | Wildlife Ranger<br>Deer Contractor |          |
| Total No of Survey Responses             | 27                     | 33                        | 37                     | 1                                  | 98       |
| Percentage of Deer Management Responses  | 27%                    | 34%                       | 38%                    | 1%                                 | 100%     |
| Total Area (ha)                          | 7,678                  | 1,267                     | 17,435                 | 10,000                             | 36,380   |
| Average Area / Property or Operator (ha) | 959                    | 127                       | 1,090                  | 833                                | 752      |
| Primary Land Use                         | Agriculture            | Agriculture               | Agriculture            | Forestry                           |          |
| Secondary Land Use                       | Forestry / Woodland    |                           | Forestry               |                                    |          |
| Primary Purpose for Management           | Protection of Ag Crops | Protection of Ag Crops    | Protection of Forestry | Protection of Forestry             |          |
| Secondary Purpose for Management         | Protection of Forestry | Own Recreational Stalking | Protection of Ag Crops |                                    |          |
| Primary View on Deer                     | Issues due to Impacts  | Issues due to Impacts     | Issues due to Impacts  | Issues due to Impacts              |          |
| Annual Roe Cull                          | 204                    | 165                       | 849                    | 559                                | 1,777    |
| Annual Red Cull                          | 64                     | 75                        | 153                    | 108                                | 400      |
| Total Annual Cull                        | 268                    | 240                       | 1,002                  | 667                                | 2,177    |
| Average Cull / Operator or Property      | 38                     | 22                        | 59                     | 56                                 | 44       |
| Cull per ha                              | 0.03                   | 0.19                      | 0.06                   | 0.07                               | 0.06     |
| DSC Level 1                              | 100% (27)*             | 77% (25)                  | 89% (33)               | 100% (1)                           | 92% (90) |
| DSC Level 2                              | 67% (18)               | 70% (23)                  | 83% (31)               | 100% (1)                           | 80% (78) |
| Records Maintained                       | 63% (17)               | 85% (28)                  | 95% (35)               | 100% (1)                           | 86% (84) |
| Night Shooting Authorisation             | 11% (3)                | 23% (8)                   | 50% (18)               | 100% (1)                           | 46% (45) |
| OOS Authorisation                        | 11% (3)                | 54% (18)                  | 72% (27)               | 100% (1)                           | 59% (58) |
| No Authorisation Required                | 89% (24)               | 46% (15)                  | 22% (8)                | 0 (0)                              | 39% (38) |
| Surveys Undertaken – WDA/TIC             | 55% (15)               | 85% (28)                  | 83% (31)               | 100% (1)                           | 81% (79) |
| Live In Project Area                     | 100% (27)              | 38% (13)                  | 56% (21)               |                                    |          |
| Travel To Project Area                   | 0% (0)                 | 62% (20)                  | 44% (16)               |                                    |          |
| Challenge #1                             | Increasing Number      | Sporting Rates            | Public Access          |                                    |          |
| Challenge #2                             | Lack of Collaboration  | Lack of Collaboration     | Lack of Collaboration  |                                    |          |
| Challenge #3                             | Access to Larders      | Public Access             | Increasing Numbers     |                                    |          |
| Attend Deer Working Group                | 22%                    | 85%                       | 89%                    |                                    |          |
| Information from DWG Only                | 78%                    | 15%                       |                        |                                    |          |

\*percentage of respondents (number in brackets)

From this table it is apparent that all four categories of primary deer manager play an important role in the delivery of deer management within the project area.

Land / Forest Owners managing deer on their own property account for 0.03 deer per hectare, the lowest cull per hectare for the four categories identified. This potentially reflects the fact that where deer are viewed as a potential resource and their management incorporates an element of let stalking to either sporting tenants and / or sporting clients, the culls undertaken are set to reflect this.

The training levels amongst Land / Forest Owners are comparable to the other categories although the level of record keeping is lower.

The reliance on and use of authorisations by Land / Forest Owners in undertaking deer management is the lowest for all four categories. This may indicate that where owners view deer, particularly Roe deer, as a potential resource, they are less concerned about the impacts they cause and the levels of agricultural and / or forestry damage suffered and therefore less inclined to resort to either night shooting and / or out of season authorisations when undertaking deer management. Similarly, the low level of survey responses returned and unwillingness to attend a deer working group meeting may also reinforce the view that deer are held as more of a resource and less of an issue by Land / Forest Owners.

Stalking tenants account for 0.19 deer per hectare, the highest cull per hectare for the four categories identified. This suggests that by operating on small areas of land their approach to deer management is more intensive and focused on the protection of agricultural crops, enjoying the benefit of their own recreational stalking resource and harvesting venison for their own consumption. Although the majority of responses indicated that they travel to the project area to stalk, it is also evident from those stalking tenants that also provided contact details that the majority live within the G and FK postcodes and therefore locally. This would suggest that they tend to focus their activities at a local scale rather than travelling to stalk deer and that their efforts are likely to be more frequent and more focused on the ground that is readily available to them.

The training levels for stalking tenants are lower than for the other four categories and this may reflect an older age demographic. It may also reflect a more established category of deer manager who has possibly been operating for many years within the project area and is retaining a higher proportion of venison for own consumption or local sale rather than sale through a game or venison dealer.

The relatively low reliance on authorisations by stalking tenants may indicate that they operate in a more traditional manner i.e. daylight stalking given that their activity is more heavily focused on recreational stalking and venison production rather than agricultural crop or forestry / woodland protection.

The level of record keeping by stalking tenants is significantly better than for landowners and the level of survey work undertaken is comparable to the surveys undertaken by deer controllers which indicates a similar, conscientious approach to recording their outputs, the populations of deer present and the impacts they cause. This also indicates that stalking tenants link deer impacts with numbers and use this guide the numbers of deer taken. It has also been noted from the survey that although stalking tenants do not utilise night shooting authorisations in the same way as Deer Controllers, they do invest in technology, including thermal imaging units which is demonstrated by the high use of such equipment in undertaking surveys and deer management.

Deer Controllers account for 0.06 deer per hectare which is a third of the cull per hectare accounted for by stalking tenants, however, the scale of their operation is 8.6 times greater

in terms of area. This reflects that deer controllers are likely to be more involved with larger properties with mixed land uses where deer densities are potentially lower than those found on smaller agricultural units. It may also be the case that these larger properties incorporate a greater area of forestry and / or woodland where deer are either partially excluded through fencing or at a lower density due to the older age-class of the crops.

Given that the majority of Deer Controllers state that they undertake deer control for the protection of forestry and woodland and a significant number also state prevention of Deer Vehicle Collisions (DVCs) as a purpose, as a category they are more aware of and focused on the public interest aspects than the either stalking tenants or landowners.

Deer controllers utilise authorisations more than stalking tenants, which may confirm their more vocational approach towards deer management and their involvement in areas where damage caused by deer is occurring. Fewer deer controllers declared that they operate without any authorisation than either stalking tenants or land / forest owners, which may also indicate that their involvement in deer management is more focused on damage prevention than viewing deer as a potential resource.

Training levels are significantly higher than for deer controllers, which possibly highlights and recognises the requirement to comply with legislation, particularly in terms of venison sales to game dealers. Record keeping is higher, and this may also suggest that a higher percentage of carcasses are sold to game / venison dealers by deer controllers than stalking tenants. A higher proportion of deer controllers also invest in technology with over 70% stating that they use thermal imaging units for deer survey work as well as for deer location when undertaking deer management.

Deer controllers are more likely to live locally to the area they operate within compared to stalking tenants and are also more likely to stalk and control deer elsewhere which indicates a more widespread and potentially more frequent involvement in deer management.

Deer contractors account for 0.07 deer per hectare which is similar to deer controllers and a third of the cull per hectare accounted for by stalking tenants, however, the scale of their operation 6.6 times greater in terms of area compared to stalking tenants which is marginally lower than the area covered by deer controllers. This may reflect that contractors are involved with larger properties where deer densities are likely to be lower. It is likely that these larger properties incorporate a greater area of forestry and / or woodland where deer are at a lower density due to the older age-class of the forest crops or are more concentrated in areas that have been clear-felled or adjoin productive agricultural land.

#### **4.2 Projection of the potential overall output of deer managers within the project area**

The overall number of survey returns confirming involvement in the Project Area was 125 of which 98 parties provided specific confirmation of their involvement in deer management. Of these, 61 parties provided relevant information and / or contact details, and these have been treated as completed returns for the purposes of this report. The completed returns represent 62% of the survey returns focusing on deer management or 49% of the overall survey returns.

On the basis that these completed returns are representative of the overall survey returns, the combined involvement and output by each category of primary deer manager within the Project Area may potentially be in the region of the following:

**Landowners (Total – 27):**

- Land area extending to 25,893 hectares.
- Deer Management undertaken by 10 landowners, 7 stalking tenants and 10 deer controllers.
- Annual deer cull 729 roe deer and 243 red deer.

**Stalking Tenants (Total – 33):**

- Land area extending to 4,191 hectares.
- Annual deer cull 455 roe deer and 210 red deer

**Controllers (Total – 37):**

- Land area extending to 40,330 hectares.
- Annual deer cull 1,575 roe deer and 280 red deer

**Contractors (Total – 1):**

- Land area extending to 10,000 hectares.
- Annual deer cull 559 roe deer and 108 red deer

**Potential Overall Output:**

- Land area extending to 80,414 hectares. (84% of Project Area)
- 10 landowners undertaking deer management
- 40 stalking tenants undertaking deer management
- 59 deer controllers and contractors undertaking deer management
- Annual cull of 3,318 roe deer and 841 red deer or 4,159 deer overall

It is evident from the results collected at the Workshops and through survey returns that the one category that appears to be under-reporting are stalking tenants and possibly deer controllers operating on smaller agricultural units. The Lowland Deer Management Report produced by SAC Commercial Ltd in July 2018 identified that there are 743 land holdings of less than 100 hectares located within the project area.

On the basis that the Project Area extends to 95,889 hectares, the land unaccounted for within the assumption set out above potentially extends to approximately 15,475 hectares. If 50% of this unaccounted area comprises these land holdings, this may account for an additional 7,743 hectares and if this is managed by stalking tenants each accounting for 0.19 deer / hectare, the overall cull may increase by an additional 1,325 – 1,615 deer per annum. This could be broken down to account for an additional 1,180 Roe deer and 294 Red Deer per annum making a total of 4,500 Roe deer and 1,135 Red deer per annum or in the region of 5,635 deer in total for the project area overall.

It is evident from the discussions at workshops, the responses to the survey and this projection that the four categories of primary deer manager identified above are delivering widespread deer management across much of the project area, even if their outputs are not fully captured or communicated. With a potential combined cull of between 5,000 – 6,000 deer, predominantly shot by stalking tenants and vocational deer controllers at their own cost, this represents a significant contribution to the Project Area and the public interests it supports.

## 5. SUMMARY & CONCLUSIONS

The support offered by stakeholder organisations to this project and the diversity of responses received through the survey was encouraging and indicated significant buy-in and engagement from a cross-section of parties involved in deer management in the project area.

It can be seen from the table in Section 4 above that the responses received from primary deer managers (land / forest owners, stalking tenants and deer controllers) were relatively evenly split between the three categories with definite trends and differences identifiable within each category.

In discussions with stakeholders during the course of this project, it was apparent that the reluctance of a wider range of small landowners and stalking tenants to engage with this project was possibly due to a fear of providing information that could be make them liable to a sporting rates assessment and / or greater outside scrutiny.

Following the reintroduction of Non-Domestic Rates in 2016, the initial request for information was via forms sent out by the Valuation Assessors to landowners throughout Scotland requested details of bag returns and cull returns along with more detailed financial information for each holding being assessed. Regardless of whether these forms were completed and returned, many landowners have now received Valuation Notices based on information submitted by landowners to the Scottish Government Rural Payments Inspections Division through the Single Application Form (SAF). The Rateable Values detailed within these notices are based on a rate per hectare for the different land types and areas identified from the SAF and not on the bag returns and cull requested in the initial request for information. The continuing fear of providing information is probably mis-guided given that in many cases, agricultural holdings will currently be eligible for relief of up to 100% where the rateable value is less than £15,000.

In undertaking Phase 2 of the Lowland Deer Management Project it is apparent that deer management is delivered by a range of interests across the majority of the project area, even if the results are not fully communicated or shared. With an estimated cull of between 5,000 – 6,000 deer, predominantly shot by stalking tenants and vocational deer controllers at their own cost, this is a significant contribution to the Project Area and the public interests it supports.

Many of the operators delivering this deer management are from a traditional lowland stalking background. They are in many instances gradually adopting new management practices, either with new technology or adapting to changing land uses and objectives and continue to deliver deer management throughout the Project Area. Although this delivery is likely to be evenly spread over the Project Area, localised hotspots do occur, as they would in any landscape. This includes areas where deer numbers are more concentrated due to changing land-use or increased pressure and impacts are more noticeable, either in terms of localised agricultural or forestry damage or a greater incidence of DVCs.

A key observation from undertaking the project is that those attending the workshops and responding to the survey had little understanding of the term “public interest actions” and how their involvement in deer management helped deliver associated benefits. Much of what the landowners, stalking tenants, deer controllers and contractors are undertaking in terms of deer management is leading to a reduction in impacts and economic costs. In some cases, it also leads to economic benefits in terms of stalking lets and venison sales, although this is not always recognised and communicated.

One category that was noticeably reluctant to engage or provide feedback through the survey were Local Authorities. Background information and survey links were sent out to the seven local authorities that fall within or adjacent to the project area and with no responses received to the survey.

Some parties attending the workshops who engaged in communication as part of the project were suspicious of what they viewed as increasing government and SNH involvement in deer management in the lowlands. When it was explained that the project was part of a wider review of deer management throughout Scotland, they showed a greater understanding of the position and an acceptance that they were not being singled out for particular scrutiny.

This suspicion as well as some of the concerns shown by members of the public in their response to the survey returns possibly demonstrates that there is a distinct lack of information available on deer management in general, particularly at a local level. Deer managers and the public are often aware through press reports of the national issues associated with deer but are not aware of the more local issues or what is being undertaken and achieved at a local scale.

Many respondents to the survey cited lack of collaboration with neighbours as a key challenge in terms of delivery of deer management but also indicated that they do not readily collaborate with others and tend to operate in isolation. Trust was also cited as a limitation to effective communication and particularly to larder sharing when discussed at the workshops and it is possible that both trust and collaboration would improve with the sharing and availability of more information.

At the Kippen workshop an opinion was expressed that there is a lack of opportunity for local people to get involved with deer management and that any opportunities that do become available are taken up by parties from outside the project area, offering significant rents that locals cannot afford. From the survey responses it is evident that whereas the stalking opportunities are finite within the project area, there are opportunities for qualified and experienced stalkers to undertake deer management and even in some cases, to be paid to undertake deer management.

Although it has not been explored in detail as part of this report it is evident that there is an example of adaptive management being displayed in terms of dealing with the recent increase in the Red deer population by the Flanders Moss Forum. This forum is demonstrating that an informal working group of agricultural, forestry and agency interests can achieve significant results when brought together to operate on a collaborative basis. This forum may provide a blueprint for other deer forums within both the project area and wider lowland setting in future.

The project has highlighted that there are good levels of training throughout the parties delivering deer management with many holding DSC 2 in addition to DSC 1. It is also evident that many parties maintain good records even if those are not fully communicated or shared.

In terms of interest in a deer working group, it is significant that between 85 – 90% of stalking tenants and deer controllers have expressed an interest in attending a deer working group meeting and that may well be strengthened by the increasing involvement by some of these operators in Flanders Moss Forum and the results that are being achieved.

## 6. RECOMMENDATIONS

The key areas that require attention within the LDMP Project are the collection and dissemination of information, the encouragement of collaboration and the generation of trust between all parties involved in deer management.

To enable these to develop we would recommend the following:

### 1. **Sharing of Information:**

The outcomes of the LDMP are circulated to those that attended the workshops and responded to the survey. In addition, the outcomes should also be circulated at LDNS meetings and other similar events.

### 2. **Maintaining Momentum:**

An informal deer working group (DWG) or network of DWGs are formed, possibly along similar lines to the Flanders Moss Forum within the Project Area. These would provide a forum to introduce deer managers to the public interest actions and the contribution they make through collaborative deer management. Information collected and disseminated by a DWG should be kept simple and straightforward. In time, the collection of data may also include habitat monitoring but this may not be essential or practical in the initial stages.

### 3. **Developing Transparency:**

The working groups are used to raise awareness of the public interest actions that are delivered through deer management and provide a forum for landowners, land managers, stalking tenants and deer managers to discuss and address areas where deer are causing issues within the project area.

Once established, these working groups can potentially share information with a wider public audience to make them aware of the issues being addressed and the results being achieved by those involved in the delivery deer management. This information could also be used to encourage greater engagement by local authorities. It can also help deliver a clear and considered educational message to the public of what is being achieved by managing the deer population and how they can play a part and help deliver the public interest actions through greater awareness and by acting responsibly when accessing the open countryside.

To enable this to happen, we would recommend that Phase 3 of the Lowland Deer Management Project is undertaken to make available to deer managers the information collected in Phase 1 and 2 of the project, to encourage the formation of a formal deer working group or groups within the Project Area and to raise awareness of the public interest actions in the lowland context.

## 7. REFERENCES

McMorran, R., Gibson-Poole, S. & Hamilton, A. 2019. Lowland deer management: assessing the delivery of public interests. *Scottish Natural Heritage Research Report No. 1069*.

**ANNEX 1: SURVEY MONKEY QUESTIONNAIRE USED FOR PHASE 2**

Lowland Deer Management :  
Assessing the Delivery of Public Interests  
Project Area : North of Glasgow  
Phase 2

Introduction

**Wild deer represent a common resource in Scotland, which, due to their movement across landholding boundaries requires strategic thinking and effective collaboration in terms of their management. This process can take a variety of formats, including coordinated strategic land management planning, collaborative meetings between stakeholders and development of best practice guidance.**

**Scottish Natural Heritage have identified a 950 sq.km pilot study area to the north of Glasgow which comprises a mix of land uses, ownerships and management typical of lowland and peri-urban areas and this includes commercial forestry, farmland, amenity land, development sites, local authority land and small holdings.**

**This project aims to collate information relating to deer management to include where, why and how it is undertaken. As part of this process we are engaging with a range of stakeholders including deer managers, recreational stalkers, land managers, owners and both rural and urban organisations to collate information on current deer management within the Project Area.**

***Please note that all information provided will be treated as confidential and will be used only in aggregate form for the purposes of compiling the report on deer management undertaken within the Project Area.***

***We would be grateful if all responses to the survey could be received by Friday 12 April 2019 when the link will be closed.***

\* Which of the following describes your involvement with deer management in the project area to the north of Glasgow?

- Land or Forest Owner
- Land or Forest Manager
- Stalking Tenant / Permission / Lease holder
- Deer Controller
- Member of Local Authority / Community Organisation
- Stakeholder Organisation
- Other (please specify)

Lowland Deer Management :  
Assessing the Delivery of Public Interests  
Project Area : North of Glasgow  
Phase 2

Land / Forest Owners

**This section applies to those owning land within the Project Area**

Name and Address of Landholding

What is the area of the Landholding? (please specify acres / hectares)

What is the predominant land use?

- Agriculture
- Forestry
- Other (please specify)

What are your main land management objectives? (Tick all that apply).

- Forestry
- Agriculture
- Commercial Stalking
- Recreational Stalking
- Conservation
- Renewable Energy
- Tourism
- Other (please specify)

Which species of deer if any, are present on your property?

- Red deer
- Roe deer
- Sika deer
- Fallow deer

Which of the following best represents your view of deer on your property?

|   |  |   |   |   |                       |
|---|--|---|---|---|-----------------------|
| Deer are considered<br>to be an issue due to<br>the impacts they<br>cause | Deer are viewed<br>somewhat negatively | I don't consider deer<br>to be an issue | Presence of deer is<br>considered to be<br>positive | Deer are considered<br>to be an important<br>resource | Not Applicable        |
| <input type="radio"/>   | <input type="radio"/>                  | <input type="radio"/>                   | <input type="radio"/>                               | <input type="radio"/>                                 | <input type="radio"/> |

Other (please specify)

Which of the following best describes deer numbers of any species on your property? (Tick all that apply)

- Deer not present
- Deer sometimes present
- Deer always present
- Deer numbers have decreased
- Deer numbers remain stable
- Deer numbers have been increasing
- Other (please specify)

How many red deer do you cull on average annually?

|                       |      |                          |
|-----------------------|------|--------------------------|
| 0                     | 300+ | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| <input type="range"/> |      |                          |

How many roe deer do you cull on average annually?

|                       |      |                          |
|-----------------------|------|--------------------------|
| 0                     | 300+ | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| <input type="range"/> |      |                          |

Who carries out deer management on your property? (Tick all that apply)

- Owner
- Management company
- Stalking tenant/s or clients
- Controller/s employed to undertake deer management
- No deer management is carried out

How many people managing deer on your property have the following qualifications?

Deer Stalkers Certificate  
- Level 1

Trained Hunter

Deer Stalkers Certificate  
- Level 2

SNH "Fit & Competent"  
Register

Other (please specify)

What records do you keep for deer management undertaken?

- Species shot
- Number shot
- Date shot
- Venison kept for own consumption
- Venison sold to game dealer
- Time spent on stalking / deer management activities
- Other (please specify)

How do you collaborate with neighbouring interests when undertaking deer management?

- Cull planning
- Combined deer management operations
- Larder sharing
- Not applicable
- Other (please specify)

Which of the following Authorisations do you use to manage deer?

- Night Shooting Authorisation
- General Authorisation - Out of Season
- Specific Authorisation - Out of Season
- No authorisations are required

Which of the following do you carry out as part of your deer management activities?

- Woodland Damage Assessments
- Thermal imaging counts
- Dung counts/population assessment
- Other (please specify)

What do you consider to be the main challenges for you in managing deer on your property in the next 5 years? (Tick all that apply).

- Increasing numbers of deer
- Decreasing numbers of deer
- Lack of information about deer numbers
- Lack of collaboration with neighbours
- Lack of qualified individuals to carry out control
- Access to lardering facilities
- Access to game dealers
- Sporting rates
- Changes in other local land management practices

Other (please specify)

Are there any specific issues you would like to see this project address in the future?

Would you be interested in being involved in a Deer Working Group?

Yes - I would like to attend meetings

I would like to receive information only

I am not interested in being involved

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Managers / Agents

**This sections applies to those managing land and/or forestry within the Project Area**

How many landholdings do you manage on behalf of clients in the project area?

What is the overall area of the landholdings (please specify acres / hectares)

What is the predominant land use?

- Agriculture
- Forestry
- Other (please specify)

What are the main land management objectives on these properties? (Tick all that apply).

- Forestry
- Agriculture
- Commercial Sport
- Conservation
- Renewable Energy
- Tourism
- Other (please specify)

Which species of deer if any, are present on your property?

- Red deer
- Roe deer
- Sika deer
- Fallow deer

How important are deer generally to your objectives?

| Presence of deer is considered to be an issue | Deer are viewed somewhat negatively | Deer are viewed both positively and negatively | Presence of deer is considered to be positive | Deer are considered to be an important resource | Deer not considered important |
|---|-------------------------------------|--|---|---|-------------------------------|
| <input type="radio"/>                         | <input type="radio"/>               | <input type="radio"/>                          | <input type="radio"/>                         | <input type="radio"/>                           | <input type="radio"/>         |

What is your general perception of deer numbers on the properties you manage? (Tick all that apply).

- Deer numbers have been decreasing overall
- Deer numbers have remained stable
- Deer numbers have been increasing overall
- Unsure
- Trends in deer numbers vary from property to property
- Other (please specify)

Which of the following do you carry out as part of deer management activities?

- Woodland Damage Assessments
- Thermal imaging counts
- Dung counts/population assessment
- Other (please specify)

How many red deer are culled on average annually on properties you manage?

0 300+

How many roe deer are culled on average annually on properties you manage?

0 300+

How many of the properties you manage have the following carrying out deer control?

Owner

Management company

Stalking tenant/s or clients

Controller/s employed to undertake deer management

No deer management is carried out

How many people managing deer on these properties have the following qualifications?

Deer Stalkers Certificate Level 1

Trained Hunter

Deer Stalkers Certificate Level 2

SNH Fit & Competent Register

Other (please specify)

What records do you keep for deer management undertaken?

- Species shot
- Number shot
- Date shot
- Venison kept for own consumption
- Venison sold to game dealer
- Time spent on stalking / deer management activities
- Other (please specify)

How do you collaborate with neighbouring interests when undertaking deer management?

- Cull planning
- Combined deer management operations
- Larder sharing
- Not applicable
- Other (please specify)

Which of the following Authorisations do you use to manage deer in the Project Area?

- Night Shooting Authorisation
- General Authorisation - Out of Season
- Specific Authorisation - Out of Season
- No authorisations are required

What do you consider to be the main challenges for you in managing deer on your properties in the next 5 years? (Tick all that apply).

- Increasing numbers of deer
- Decreasing numbers of deer
- Lack of information about deer numbers
- Lack of collaboration with neighbours
- Lack of qualified individuals to carry out control
- Access to larding facilities
- Access to game dealers
- Sporting rates
- Changes in other local land management practices

Other (please specify)

Are there any specific issues you would like to see this project address in the future?

Would you be interested in being involved in a Deer Working Group?

Yes - I would like to attend meetings

I would like to receive information only

I am not interested in being involved

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Stalking Tenants / Permission Holders

**This section applies to those that lease or hold permission on agricultural and / or forestry land for recreational stalking.**

***Please note - it would be helpful if a separate survey could be completed for each holding that you stalk deer on.***

Name and location of main landholding

Area of main landholding (please specify acres / hectares)

How many other properties do you carry out deer stalking on in the project area? (If multiple, please list with areas and complete a separate survey for each property).

What is the main purpose of carrying out deer control? (Tick all that apply).

- To protect forestry/woodland
- To protect agricultural crops
- Accompanying paying stalking clients
- Own Recreational Stalking lease or permission
- For conservation objectives
- Venison production
- Population control/management
- Prevention of Deer Vehicle Collisions
- Other (please specify)

Which species of deer if any, are present on the main property on which you stalk?

- Red deer
- Roe deer
- Sika deer
- Fallow deer

Which of the following best represents the view of deer on the main property on which you stalk?

|  |                                     |  |  |   |                       |
|--|-------------------------------------|--|--|---|-----------------------|
| Deer are considered to be an issue due to the impacts they cause | Deer are viewed somewhat negatively | Deer are not considered to be an issue | Presence of deer is considered to be positive and encouraged | Deer are considered to be an important resource | Not Applicable        |
| <input type="radio"/>  | <input type="radio"/>               | <input type="radio"/>                  | <input type="radio"/>  | <input type="radio"/>                           | <input type="radio"/> |

Other (please specify)

Which of the following best describes deer numbers of any species on the main property where you stalk deer? (Tick all that apply)

- Deer sometimes present
- Deer always present
- Deer numbers have decreased
- Deer numbers remain stable
- Deer numbers have been increasing
- Other (please specify)

How many red deer do you cull on average annually in the project area?

0 300+

How many roe deer do you cull on average annually in the project area?

0 300+

Which of the following best describes how you are undertaking deer management? (Tick all that apply).

- Stalking leased for payment
- Deer controller employed by owner or agent
- No formal arrangement in place
- Deer controller contracted by management company to undertake deer management
- Other (please specify)

Which of the following qualifications do you have?

- Deer Stalkers Certificate Level 1
- Trained Hunter
- Deer Stalkers Certificate Level 2
- SNH Fit & Competent Register
- Other (please specify)

What records do you keep for deer management undertaken?

- Species shot
- Number shot
- Date shot
- Carcass weights
- Venison kept for own consumption
- Venison sold to game dealer
- Time spent on stalking / deer management activities
- Other (please specify)

How do you collaborate with neighbouring interests when undertaking deer management?

- Cull planning
- Combined deer management operations
- Larder sharing
- No collaboration undertaken
- Other (please specify)

Which of the following Authorisations do you use to manage deer in the Project Area?

- Night Shooting Authorisation
- General Authorisation - Out of Season
- Specific Authorisation - Out of Season
- No authorisations are required

Which of the following do you carry out as part of deer management activities?

- Woodland Damage Assessments
- Thermal imaging counts
- Dung counts/population assessment
- Other (please specify)

Do you live in or travel to the Project Area to stalk deer?

- Live in the Project Area
- Travel to the Project Area

Do you undertake deer stalking outwith the Project Area?

- No
- Yes - within 50 miles of the Project Area
- Yes - elsewhere in Scotland
- Yes - elsewhere in the UK

What do you consider to be the main challenges for you in managing deer in the next 5 years? (Tick all those that apply)

- Increasing numbers of deer
- Decreasing numbers of deer
- Lack of information about deer numbers
- Lack of collaboration with neighbours
- Lack of qualified individuals to carry out control
- Access to larding facilities
- Access to game dealers
- Sporting rates
- Changes in local land management practices
- Practical access issues and extraction
- Increased public access

Other (please specify)

Are there any specific issues you would like to see this project address in the future?

Would you be interested in being involved in a Deer Working Group?

- Yes - I would like to attend meetings
- I would like to receive information only
- I am not interested in being involved

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Deer Controllers

**This section applies to those that control deer either as part of their employment or on a contractual basis within the Project Area.**

***Please note - it would be helpful if a separate survey could be completed for each holding that you control deer on.***

Name and location of main landholding

Area of main landholding (please specify acres / hectares)

How many other properties do you carry out deer control on in the project area? (If multiple, please list with areas and complete a separate survey for each property).

What is the main purpose of carrying out deer control? (Tick all that apply).

- To protect forestry/woodland
- To protect agricultural crops
- Accompanying paying stalking clients
- Own Recreational Stalking lease or permission
- For conservation objectives
- Venison production
- Population control/management
- Prevention of Deer Vehicle Collisions
- Other (please specify)

Which species of deer if any, are present on the property on which you control deer?

- Red deer
- Roe deer
- Sika deer
- Fallow deer

Which of the following best represents the view of deer on the main property on which you control deer?

|  |                                     |  |  |   |                       |
|--|-------------------------------------|--|--|---|-----------------------|
| Deer are considered to be an issue due to the impacts they cause | Deer are viewed somewhat negatively | Deer are not considered to be an issue | Presence of deer is considered to be positive and encouraged | Deer are considered to be an important resource | Not Applicable        |
| <input type="radio"/>  | <input type="radio"/>               | <input type="radio"/>                  | <input type="radio"/>  | <input type="radio"/>                           | <input type="radio"/> |

Other (please specify)

Which of the following best describes deer numbers of any species on the main property where you control deer? (Tick all that apply)

- Deer sometimes present
- Deer always present
- Deer numbers have decreased
- Deer numbers remain stable
- Deer numbers have been increasing
- Other (please specify)

How many red deer do you cull on average annually in the project area?

0 300+

How many roe deer do you cull on average annually in the project area?

0 300+

Which of the following best describes how you are undertaking deer management? (Tick all that apply).

- Deer controller employed by owner or agent
- Stalking leased for payment
- Deer controller contracted to undertake deer management
- No formal arrangement in place
- Other (please specify)

Which of the following qualifications do you have?

- Deer Stalkers Certificate Level 1
- Trained Hunter
- Deer Stalkers Certificate Level 2
- SNH Fit & Competent Register
- Other (please specify)

What records do you keep for deer management undertaken?

- Species shot
- Number shot
- Date shot
- Carcass weights
- Venison kept for own consumption
- Venison sold to game dealer
- Time spent on stalking / on deer management activities
- Other (please specify)

How do you collaborate with neighbouring interests when undertaking deer management?

- Cull planning
- Combined deer management operations
- Larder sharing
- No collaboration undertaken
- Other (please specify)

Which of the following Authorisations do you use to control deer in the Project Area?

- Night Shooting Authorisation
- General Authorisation - Out of Season
- Specific Authorisation - Out of Season
- No authorisations are required

Do you live in or travel to the Project Area to undertake deer control?

- Live in the Project Area
- Travel to the Project Area

Do you control deer outwith the Project Area?

- No
- Yes - within 50 miles of the Project Area
- Yes - elsewhere in Scotland
- Yes - elsewhere in the UK

What do you consider to be the main challenges for you in managing deer in the next 5 years? (Tick all those that apply)

- Increasing numbers of deer
- Decreasing numbers of deer
- Lack of information about deer numbers
- Lack of collaboration with neighbours
- Lack of qualified individuals to carry out control
- Access to larding facilities
- Access to game dealers
- Sporting rates
- Changes in local land management practices
- Practical access issues and extraction
- Increased public access

Other (please specify)

Which of the following do you carry out as part of deer management activities?

- Woodland Damage Assessments
- Thermal imaging counts
- Dung counts/population assessment
- Other (please specify)

Are there any specific issues you would like to see this project address in the future?

Would you be interested in being involved in a Deer Working Group?

- Yes - I would like to attend meetings
- I would like to receive information only
- I am not interested in being involved

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Local Authority / Community Organisation

Name of Authority / Community Area

Please describe briefly your interest in deer management in the project area

Which of the following best represents your view of deer locally?

|   |  |                                       |   |   |                       |
|---|--|---------------------------------------|---|---|-----------------------|
| Deer are considered<br>to be an issue due to<br>the impacts they<br>cause | Deer are viewed<br>somewhat negatively | Deer not considered<br>to be an issue | Presence of deer is<br>considered to be<br>positive | Deer are considered<br>to be an important<br>resource | Not Applicable        |
| <input type="radio"/>   | <input type="radio"/>                  | <input type="radio"/>                 | <input type="radio"/>                               | <input type="radio"/>                                 | <input type="radio"/> |

Other (please specify)

How do you rate the following in terms of importance regarding the management of deer in the project area?

|   | Not relevant          | Not important         | Somewhat<br>Important | Extremely Important   | Don't know            |
|---|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| Transparency in deer management planning          | <input type="radio"/> |
| Engagement between local community and landowners | <input type="radio"/> |
| Protection of Designated Sites                    | <input type="radio"/> |
| Increasing numbers of deer                        | <input type="radio"/> |
| Decreasing numbers of deer                        | <input type="radio"/> |
| Protection and enhancement of native woodlands    | <input type="radio"/> |
| Woodland expansion                                | <input type="radio"/> |

|   | Not relevant          | Not important         | Somewhat Important    | Extremely Important   | Don't know            |
|---|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| Availability of information about deer management                                     | <input type="radio"/> |
| Public awareness about deer management  | <input type="radio"/> |
| Collaboration between landowners/managers   | <input type="radio"/> |
| Deer welfare  | <input type="radio"/> |
| Public access and public safety concerns  | <input type="radio"/> |
| Food safety & venison   | <input type="radio"/> |
| Prevention of damage to agricultural/forestry interests                               | <input type="radio"/> |
| Risks of Deer Vehicle Collisions  | <input type="radio"/> |
| Changes in local land management practices  | <input type="radio"/> |
| Deer in people's gardens  | <input type="radio"/> |
| Opportunities to take part in stalking activities                                     | <input type="radio"/> |
| Economic benefits to local community through employment & income from deer management | <input type="radio"/> |

Other (please specify)

Are there any specific issues you would like to see this project address in the future?

Would you be interested in being involved in a Deer Working Group?

- Yes - we would like to attend meetings
- We would like to receive information only
- We are not interested in being involved

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Stakeholder Organisations

Name of Stakeholder Organisation

Please describe briefly your interest in deer management in the project area

How do you rate the following in terms of importance regarding the management of deer in the project area?

|   | Not relevant          | Not important         | Somewhat Important    | Extremely Important   | Don't know            |
|---|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| Transparency in deer management planning          | <input type="radio"/> |
| Engagement between local community and landowners | <input type="radio"/> |
| Protection of Designated Sites                    | <input type="radio"/> |
| Increasing numbers of deer                        | <input type="radio"/> |
| Decreasing numbers of deer                        | <input type="radio"/> |
| Protection and enhancement of native woodlands    | <input type="radio"/> |
| Woodland expansion                                | <input type="radio"/> |
| Availability of information about deer management | <input type="radio"/> |
| Public awareness about deer management            | <input type="radio"/> |
| Collaboration between landowners/managers         | <input type="radio"/> |
| Deer welfare                                      | <input type="radio"/> |
| Public access and public safety concerns          | <input type="radio"/> |

|   | Not relevant          | Not important         | Somewhat Important    | Extremely Important   | Don't know            |
|---|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| Food safety & venison   | <input type="radio"/> |
| Prevention of damage to agricultural/forestry interests                               | <input type="radio"/> |
| Risks of Deer Vehicle Collisions  | <input type="radio"/> |
| Changes in local land management practices  | <input type="radio"/> |
| Deer in people's gardens  | <input type="radio"/> |
| Opportunities to take part in stalking activities                                     | <input type="radio"/> |
| Economic benefits to local community through employment & income from deer management | <input type="radio"/> |

Other (please specify)

Are there any specific issues you would like to see this project address in the future?

Would you be interested in being involved in a Deer Working Group?

- Yes - we would like to attend meetings
- We would like to receive information only
- We are not interested in being involved

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Other

Name of Other Party / Organisation

Please describe briefly your interest in deer management in the project area

How do you rate the following in terms of importance regarding the management of deer in the project area?

|   | Not relevant          | Not important         | Somewhat Important    | Extremely Important   | Don't know            |
|---|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| Transparency in deer management planning          | <input type="radio"/> |
| Engagement between local community and landowners | <input type="radio"/> |
| Protection of Designated Sites                    | <input type="radio"/> |
| Increasing numbers of deer                        | <input type="radio"/> |
| Decreasing numbers of deer                        | <input type="radio"/> |
| Protection and enhancement of native woodlands    | <input type="radio"/> |
| Woodland expansion                                | <input type="radio"/> |
| Availability of information about deer management | <input type="radio"/> |
| Public awareness about deer management            | <input type="radio"/> |
| Collaboration between landowners/managers         | <input type="radio"/> |
| Deer welfare                                      | <input type="radio"/> |
| Public access and public safety concerns          | <input type="radio"/> |

|   | Not relevant          | Not important         | Somewhat Important    | Extremely Important   | Don't know            |
|---|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| Food safety & venison   | <input type="radio"/> |
| Prevention of damage to agricultural/forestry interests                               | <input type="radio"/> |
| Risks of Deer Vehicle Collisions  | <input type="radio"/> |
| Changes in local land management practices  | <input type="radio"/> |
| Deer in people's gardens  | <input type="radio"/> |
| Opportunities to take part in stalking activities                                     | <input type="radio"/> |
| Economic benefits to local community through employment & income from deer management | <input type="radio"/> |

Other (please specify)

Name of Stakeholder Organisation

Are there any specific issues you would like to see this project address in the future?

Would you be interested in being involved in a Deer Working Group?

- Yes - we would like to attend meetings
- We would like to receive information only
- We are not interested in being involved

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Contact Information

**As part of this project we may need to contact those parties who have completed the survey to discuss general aspects of deer management that may not be covered within the questionnaire and to keep them informed of further stages of the Lowland Deer Management Project.**

**Under the new General Data Protection Regulations, Chetwynd Rural will only hold personal information for you on the basis of 'legitimate interest' for the purpose of the Lowland Deer Management Project.**

**With your permission, the information that we will hold are your contact details and this may include business/home address, post code, telephone number, email address.**

**You may ask to review or withdraw this information at any time and you should contact Chetwynd Rural if you wish to do this.**

Contact Information

Name

Address 1

Address 2

Postcode

Email

Telephone Number

What is your preferred method of receiving communication?

By Email

By Post

By Phone

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Survey Complete

**Thank you for taking the time to complete this survey.**

**If you have any queries or require further information about anything contained in this survey  
please contact:**

**Tom Chetwynd - [lowland.deer.management@gmail.com](mailto:lowland.deer.management@gmail.com)**

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